

LS:AAkalovsky

G:LTMerchant
EUR:FDKohler

Approved: WH
10,12/59

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Memorandum of Conversation

KV 9331
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DISTRIBUTION AND 901068
by HR-m / WFO Date 3/15/41
DATE: September 26, 1959
September 27, 1959,
10:15 a.m.

SUBJECT: Nuclear Exchange; Communist China

Recategorized as
Category "A"

PARTICIPANTS: US
The President
The Secretary of State
Mr. Merchant
Ambassador Thompson
Mr. Kohler
Mr. Akalovsky

USSR
Chairman Khrushchev
Mr. Gromyko
Mr. Soldatov
Mr. Troyanovsky

787 Warren A. Henderson
NOV 4 1965

COPIES TO: S/S The White House - Gen. Goodpaster
G - Mr. Merchant FE - Mr. Parsons
C - Mr. Reinhardt INR - Mr. Cumming
EUR - Mr. Kohler S/AE - Mr. Farley (excerpt)
ISA - Mr. Irwin Amembassy Moscow, Amb. Thompson
Defense - Mr. McElroy JCS - General Twining

September 26:

After his return from taking Mr. Khrushchev to his Gettysburg farm, the President said that Mr. Khrushchev had told him that they were cutting way back on their atomic power plant program on grounds that it was too expensive.

Mr. Khrushchev also told the President that the Soviets were making a number of atomic powered submarines, some of which were equipped with missiles. He also stated that the engines installed in the submarines were superior to ours.

September 27, approximately 10:15 a.m.

Mr. Khrushchev, referring to the conversation he had just had with Mr. Dillon, said that he could report to the President that the temperature was neither cold nor hot, i.e., the situation as he saw it was neither fish nor fowl.

The President jokingly remarked that in America they also say, "nor red herring". He then said that he had just been in church and that his preacher had preached both for Mr. Khrushchev and himself.

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The President then referred to the Protocol signed between Mr. McCone and Mr. Yemelyanov regarding possible contacts in the field of atomic energy. He said that he had only seen the protocol but had not read it. His understanding was that the brief protocol was addressed to both the Chairman and him and that it contained recommendations with regard to certain actions to be taken in that field. He believed that there was no point in making that document public until both Mr. K and himself had studied it. Later, through diplomatic channels, agreement could be reached as to the publication of that document.

Mr. K replied that he had not seen the document either. However, he pointed out that he had approved in advance the fields of contacts in that area and that Mr. Yemelyanov had full authority from him in dealing with Mr. McCone. In general, he said, the Soviet Union was prepared to start with small steps first and then expand contacts in the field of atomic energy.

The President said that the U.S. was also prepared to do so.

Mr. K said he knew about this and observed that he was familiar with the President's desires in this field. It was strange, he remarked smilingly, to see the President, a military man, be so peaceful. He then recalled a statement by Mr. Macmillan in which the latter had said that Mr. K was afraid of war more than anyone else. At that time, Mr. K continued, he wanted to reply to this statement rather sharply but he changed his mind. The point was, he said, the Soviet Union was not afraid of war but still wanted to prevent it. Mr. Macmillan had made that statement before his visit to the USSR and he had not been reminded of it during his visit there.

The President said that, as far as he was concerned, he was afraid of nuclear war and that to his mind everyone should be. During the last war, he said, he may have had moments of exhilaration in commanding huge armies, but now war has become nothing more than a struggle for survival. The President then inquired whether Mr. K wanted to discuss any specific points.

Mr. K replied that he did, namely, the question of an agreement on disarmament.

The President observed that he agreed that this point be placed first on any agenda that might be developed for future negotiations, because this was the most important question.

At this point the Secretary suggested to the President that he discuss, perhaps privately, the procedures for a

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communiqué on their talks.

The President said that he had been told at Gettysburg about the hundreds of correspondents down there, including not only Americans and Russians but British, French and many others. This indicated the great world interest in these talks he and the Chairman were having. Despite the fact that everyone had been told that no negotiations would take place, he thought it might be desirable that he and Mr. Khrushchev have another private talk.

Mr. Khrushchev nodded assent to the President's statement, but said he first wanted to mention another subject. He said he had no brief to speak on behalf of the Chinese Government and that, even if such authority had been offered, he would not have taken the responsibility on himself. However, he would be visiting China in the near future and he would not want to be in the position of saying he had lost the Chinese needle in a haystack. He would like, therefore, to inquire about U.S. policy toward the Chinese Government and what the future course of our policy might be.

The President replied that the Chinese Communists by their own actions have made it practically impossible for us to talk with them except in a very sketchy way through the occasional ambassadorial talks. These had taken place first in Geneva and now were continuing in Warsaw but related mainly to such questions as that of the American personnel imprisoned or detained in Communist China. The Chinese Communists are engaged in aggressive actions and have defied the United Nations. Until they purged themselves, there was not much prospect of any change in our position. In fact, there was not much we could do in the circumstances. We were basically in a position of waiting.

Secretary Herter interjected that the Chinese Communists were still threatening to use force against Taiwan and the islands in the Formosa Straits. They were still holding five American prisoners and were refusing to release them, although they had promised to do so in writing. Communist China was still an outlaw as far as the United Nations was concerned because of its aggression in Korea.

Mr. Khrushchev replied that the Soviets regard it as too bad that the United States takes the position that it does with regard to the Chinese Communist Government and believes that this position does not contribute to a good overall international atmosphere. With respect to the question of the Americans detained in China, Mr. Khrushchev said he knew nothing about this and he could not comment on the subject.

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However, when he goes to Peiping in the near future he thought he might ask the Chinese leadership about the question. With respect to the question of Taiwan, the Soviets agree with the Chinese Communists. Taiwan is a province of China and what goes on with respect to the island is part of the process of the Chinese revolution and the Soviet Union fully understands China's aspirations in that respect. The United States is to blame for the fact that the Chinese Communists are not in the United Nations. In opposing the Chinese Communists, the United States has taken advantage of its temporary majority in the United Nations and has pursued a policy which is in fact detrimental to the United Nations. It would be better if the United States would do away with all this and thus contribute to the general peace. He said the President should realize that if some islands were detached from the United States by a mutinous general and the USSR should support that general, the United States would not like it. Taiwan is a part of China and Chiang Kai-shek is comparable to Kerensky, though the latter has no territory at the moment. Essentially, however, the United States concluding a treaty with Chiang is like the United States concluding a treaty with Kerensky. He understood, however, that Kerensky had recently married a rich American lady, so maybe Kerensky would not be interested and would not now need U.S. Government support.

The Secretary said he wanted to stress that the Chairman had made an important statement in saying that the USSR supported the Chinese Communist use of force against Taiwan.

Mr. Khrushchev said he believed that the Chinese Communists have the right to liberate Taiwan from a Chinese general who has mutinied against the Government. In that respect the Soviet Union supports Communist China.

The President said that it was clear that our views were so divergent on this subject that there was really no point in discussing the question in detail. However, if his memory served him right, in the later stages of World War II, the United States, the USSR and Britain had all agreed to support Chiang, who had fought the Japanese so valiantly during the entire war, as the legitimate government of China. Since then the Soviet position had become different. It was the belief of the United States that there had been a great cataclysm in China and as a result, Chiang Kai-shek had been driven to Formosa. He could not be considered a mutinous general. The President would repeat that our positions were now diametrically opposed and that there would appear to be no use in discussing the question further.

Mr. Khrushchev replied that he agreed that there was not

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much point in further discussion of this question. It was true that during the war the Soviet Government had had good relations with Chiang. General Chuikov, who later was the famous defender of Stalingrad, had been a military adviser to Chiang. In fact, many other Russian generals also advised Chiang. However, a revolution is a revolution. It turns everything upside down. If one could suppose that some Soviet general should have mutinied, seized Sakhalin and concluded a treaty of support with the United States, the Soviet Government would have had to hit him and hit him hard. In the reverse case, the United States would take the same action if one of our generals seized an island and secured Soviet support. Therefore, he could not understand why Communist China should act differently. However, he agreed the question did not seem ripe for discussion.

The President replied that he did not agree with the comparison which the Chairman had made. These were not valid analogies. President Chiang Kai-shek headed the legitimate government of China. It was true that he had been defeated on the mainland but he had decided to hang on where he could, that is, on Taiwan. In no way could he be compared to a mutineer.

Mr. Khrushchev replied that there could not be two legal governments in one country. The question arises as to which will be the legitimate government in China - Formosa or Peiping. The only possible answer to this question is Peiping, as the government established in the Chinese capital. He said the President prefers Chiang. This was a matter of taste. He prefers Mao Tse Tung and Chou En Lai.

The President replied that it was not a matter of taste. The U. S. has obligations toward the government of the Republic of China which it respects and intends to fulfill.

Mr. Khrushchev retorted that these were obligations which we took on ourselves voluntarily. They were not given to us by an act of God. Therefore, they could be changed. Furthermore, the Soviet Union also had undertaken certain obligations.

The President said he certainly did not claim perfection with respect to the many decisions he was called upon to make. He simply sought to do the right thing.

Mr. Khrushchev said that he had to respect the President's statement. He merely would point out that he considered that there was a lack of consistency in our policy. The President said that if the two German states remained, they would be an indefinite hot bed of conflict. If this statement was true with respect to Germany, then it was true with respect to China, too. In fact, it was more serious with respect to

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China because in Germany the two states had respectively 18,000,000 and 50,000,000 inhabitants. In China the Chinese Communists had 650,000,000 to 7 - 9,000,000 on Taiwan.

The President agreed that it was possible to make such a comparison. However, he commented that human affairs got very badly tangled at times and that we would simply have to try to straighten them out.

Mr. Khrushchev replied that he realized this but that he had just wanted to point out the inconsistency of our policy. He then quoted a Russian proverb which turned out to be untranslatable as related to the conversation, to the effect that "policy is like a wagon tongue between two horses".

The President said he wanted to add that while he admitted the comparison between the German and Chinese situations, he wished to point out that the U.S. seeks peaceful settlements in both instances.

The Secretary added also in Korea and Viet Nam.

Mr. Khrushchev said that he did not insist on a military solution in China. There could be a peaceful settlement, he continued, if the U.S. did not give military support to Chiang. In turn, he continued, the USSR also gave military aid to the Chinese Communists. Chiang was our ally, Mao was their ally. However, he agreed that this subject had been exhausted.

The President commented that it would remain a problem for some time.

Mr. Khrushchev agreed with this, saying he meant that the subject had been exhausted only insofar as the present exchange of views was concerned.

The President then referred to the suggestion that he and the Chairman have a private talk as to whether they wanted to say anything at the conclusion of their talks. They could then turn over to their aides the necessary drafting.

Thereupon the President and Chairman Khrushchev entered private discussions at approximately 11:45 a.m.

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